

May God bless the Rehnquist family. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

The related proclamation of September 4 on the death of Chief Justice Rehnquist is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the American Red Cross Disaster Operations Center *September 4, 2005*

I've come to the Red Cross to, one, thank the good folks here who are working here. We've got people from around the country who have come to help heal the lives of those who have been affected by this terrible disaster.

I told some folks back there that the world saw this tidal wave of disaster ascend upon the gulf coast, and now they're going to see a tidal wave of compassion. There's over 5,000 Red Cross—or nearly 5,000 Red Cross volunteers that are working long hours at shelters in 19 States to help these folks that have been displaced get their feet back on the ground.

I can't think of anything more encouraging for someone who has endured the tragedy of a storm than to have a loving soul say, "I'm here to help you. And I want you to know a lot of people care for you." And that's the spirit of the Red Cross and its volunteers.

If you want to help—help this country heal after the result of this disaster, please give cash money to the Red Cross. I just passed the place where volunteers and staffers are taking calls from around the country, and the response has been good, but there's more that needs to be done. Remember, it's the Red Cross that provides much of the first compassion that a person finds. It's the Red Cross that helps provide cash money for somebody, to help them transition from being disrupted—having their lives disrupted to a more normal life.

It's the Red Cross that helps feed. And so the Red Cross needs money.

The Red Cross can use volunteers. People—this is a storm of enormous magnitude. A lot of people's lives have been affected. I know much of the country is focused on New Orleans, Louisiana, but parishes outside of New Orleans have been ruined. Up and down the coast of Mississippi, communities have been destroyed. And so we need more manpower. And if you want to help, please call the Red Cross, and—your local Red Cross, and they'll find a way for you to help.

And finally, the Red Cross is in need of blood, and there's a blood drive going on. As a matter of fact, the White House will be having a blood drive on Friday. And I will be encouraging the employees there to donate blood. And I hope others will do so as well.

This country is coming together to help people who hurt. And one of the leaders of the army of compassion is the Red Cross. And I'm grateful for your leadership, Marty. I want to thank all the good folks here who have—who really show the world the great compassion of our country. And thanks for letting me come by to say hello.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Marsha J. "Marty" Evans, president and chief executive officer, American Red Cross.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of John G. Roberts, Jr., To Be Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court
September 5, 2005

Morning. This summer I announced the nomination of Judge John Roberts to be Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. I chose Judge Roberts from among the most distinguished jurists and attorneys in the country because he possesses the intellect, experience, and temperament to be an outstanding member of our Nation's highest court.

For the past 2 months, Members of the United States Senate and the American people have learned about the career and character of Judge Roberts. They like what they see. He's a gentleman. He's a man of integrity and fairness. And throughout his life, he has inspired the respect and loyalty of others. John Roberts has built a record of excellence and achievement, and a reputation for good will and decency toward others.

In his extraordinary career, Judge Roberts has argued 39 cases before the Nation's highest court. When I nominated him to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, he was confirmed by unanimous consent. Both those who've worked with him and those who have faced him in the courtroom speak with admiration of his striking ability as a lawyer and his natural gifts as a leader. Judge Roberts has earned the Nation's confidence, and I'm pleased to announce that I will nominate him to serve as the 17th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

The passing of Chief Justice William Rehnquist leaves the center chair empty

just 4 weeks left before the Supreme Court reconvenes. It is in the interest of the Court and the country to have a Chief Justice on the bench on the first full day of the fall term. The Senate is well along in the process of considering Judge Roberts's qualifications. They know his record and his fidelity to the law. I'm confident that the Senate can complete hearings and confirm him as Chief Justice within a month. As a result of my decision to nominate Judge Roberts to be chief justice, I also have the responsibility to submit a new nominee to follow Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. I will do so in a timely manner.

Twenty-five years ago, John Roberts came to Washington as a clerk to Justice William Rehnquist. In his boss, the young law clerk found a role model, a professional mentor, and a friend for life. I'm certain that Chief Justice Rehnquist was hoping to welcome John Roberts as a colleague, and we're all sorry that day didn't come. Yet it's fitting that a great Chief Justice be followed in office by a person who shared his deep reverence for the Constitution, his profound respect for the Supreme Court, and his complete devotion to the cause of justice.

Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chief Justice-designate Roberts.